Why Disfranchisement is Bad

By ARCHIBALD H. GRIMKÉ

IF the disfranchisement of the negro by the South could settle permanently the negro question, I think that the action of that section would find its justification in that achievement, according to the jesuitical principle that the end justifies the means. But can disfranchisement of the negro settle the negro question? First: Can it do so for the negro? Second: Can it do so for the South? Third: Can it do so for the rest of the nation? I do not think that it can do so for the negro, or for the South, or for the rest of the nation. And unless disfranchisement of the negro settles this question in its threefold aspect, it will not settle it in such a way that it will long stay settled. If the negro refuse to abide by such a settlement, the question will not be so settled merely because the South has decided so to settle it. Neither can the South of to-day settle the question by disfranchisement, if disfranchisement of the negro be found in operation to injure the South of to-morrow much more deeply than it does the negro. For what is bad for the negro to-day will be found to be still worse for the South to-morrow. The South must, therefore, awake some time to this fact, unless she is indeed stricken with that hopeless madness by which the gods intend to destroy her. But even if the South and the negro agree so to settle the question, the question will not be permanently settled if the North, if the rest of the nation, refuses eventually to form a party to the compact. For the rest the nation, quite independently of the action of the South and the acquiescence of the negro, will have something, something very decisive to say ultimately about the settlement of this question. The North has, in reality, quite as much at stake in its settlement as either the negro or the South. Disfranchisement will not, therefore, prove a permanent settlement of the negro question if it be found in operation to affect injuriously Northern and national interests, or to work badly in the conduct of governmental affairs in respect to those interests.

I.

Can disfranchisement settle the question for the negro? I do not think it can; I am sure that it will not, for the simple and sufficient reason that the negro will not consent to such a settlement—a settlement which virtually decitizenizes him, and relegates him to a condition of practical servitude in the republic. He has tasted freedom, he has tasted manhood rights, he has tasted civil and political equality. He knows that his freedom, his American citizenship, his right to vote, have been written into the Constitution of the United States, and written large there in three great amendments. He knows more: he knows that he himself has written his title to those rights with his blood in the history of the country in four wars, and he is of the firm belief that his title to them is a perfect one.

No party, no State, no section, can, therefore, deprive him of those rights without leaving in his mind a sense of bitter wrong, of being cheated of what belongs to him, cheated in defiance of law, of the supreme law of the land. and in spite of his just claim to fairer treatment at the hands of his fellow-countrymen. He will understand that this enormity was committed against him on account of his race and color. He will see that it was done by the white race—a race that has ever wronged him, that has never failed to take from him, because it had the power, whatever he cared most for in the world. Nothing could possibly make him, under such cruel circumstances, love such a race, such an enemy. He will learn to hate the white race, therefore, with all the strength of rancor of centuries of accumulated outrages and oppressions.

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The relation of the two races in the South could not, then, be one of mutual respect, confidence and good will. It would become, on the contrary, one of mutual fear, distrust and hatred. The whites would fear, distrust, and hate the negro, and that increasingly, because they had so deeply wronged him; and the negro would return this fear, distrust and hatred with a measure heaping up and running over, not openly, like the whites, to be sure, but covertly, cunningly, because of his weakness. He would live his life, his deeper life, more and more apart from the whites, live it in an underworld of which no white man would be able to get more than a glimpse, and that at rare intervals. It would be an underworld in which his bitter sense of wrong, his brooding miseries, his repressed faculties of mind, his crushed sensibilities, his imprisoned aspirations to be and to do as other men, his elemental powers of resistance, his primitive passions, his savage instincts, his very despair, would burn and rage beneath the thin crust of law and order which separates him from the upper world of the white race, his implacable foe and oppressor. Through this thin crust of law and order there will perforce break at times some of that hidden fire, some of that boiling lava of a race's agony and despair. There will be race feuds, race conflicts, as certainly as winds will blow, but no one will be deeply enough versed in the movements of these stormy, these fiery currents and visitations from the abysses of that underworld of the negro, to be able to discover their formation, to foretell their coming, or to forecast their extent and duration.

So far as the negro is concerned, then, to disfranchise him will not settle the negro question. It will do anything else better than that. For it will make trouble, and no end of it. It will certainly make trouble if he rise in the human scale in spite of the wrong done him. Does any one think that he will ever cease to strive for the restoration of his rights as an American citizen, and all of his rights, if he rise in character, property and intelligence? To think the contrary is to think an absurdity. But if he fall in the human scale in consequence of the wrong done him, he will surely drag the South down with him. For he and the South are bound the one to the other by a ligament as vital as that which bound together for good or bad, for life or death, the Siamese twins. The Enceladian struggles of the black Titan of the South beneath the huge mass of the white race's brutal oppressions, and of his own imbruted nature, will shape peace out of the land and prosperity out of the Southern States, and involve, finally, whites and blacks alike in common poverty, degradation, and failure in the economic world, in hopeless decline of all of the great social forces which make a people move upward and not downward, forward and not backward in civilization.

II.

Disfranchisement of the negro is bad for the South. It is bad for her, in the first place, on account of the harmful effect produced by it on her black labor. It makes a large proportion of her laboring population restless and discontented with their civil and social condition, and it will keep them so. It makes it well-nigh impossible for this restless and discontented labor class to make the most and the best of themselves with the limited opportunities afforded them, with the social and political restrictions imposed by law upon them. It hinders employers of this labor from producing the largest and the best results with it, for the same cause. For to obtain by means of this labor the largest and best results, employers of it ought to do the things, ought to seek to have the State do the things, which will tend to reduce the natural friction between labor and capital to its lowest terms, to make labor contented and happy, surely not the things which will have the opposite effect on that labor. Otherwise, the energy which ought to go into production will be scattered, consumed, in contests with capital, in active or passive resistance to bad social and economic conditions, in effective or ineffective striving to improve those conditions.

Every labor class has but a given amount of energy, I take it, to devote to production. How much of this energy may be available for productive purposes depends on its social condition, whether it is contented or discontented, getting on in the world, getting ahead in material well-being and well-doing; on its economic condition, whether it is intelligent or ignorant, efficient or inefficient; on its civil condition, its legal status, whether it

enjoys equal laws and equal opportunities with other labor classes in the struggle for existence, in the battle for bread, or whether it is crippled, obstructed instead, by unequal laws, by artificial restrictions which are made to apply to its activity alone.

The grand source of wealth of any community is its labor. The warfare which nation wages against nation to-day is not military, but industrial. Competition among nations for markets for the sale of their surplus products is at bottom a struggle of the labor of different nations for industrial possession of those markets, for the industrial supremacy of the labor of one country over the labor of other countries. Industrialism, commercialism, not militarism, mark the character of our twentieth-century civilization. That country, therefore, which takes into this industrial rivalry and struggle the best trained, the most completely equipped, the most up-to-date labor, will win over those other countries which bring to the battle for world markets a body of crude, backward and inefficient labor. Education, skill, quality, tell in production; tell at once, and tell in the long run. It is now well understood that the most intelligent labor is the most profitable labor. Ignorant labor is certainly no match in world markets for intelligent labor. It is no match in home markets either. Quality, intelligence, will prevail in such an industrial contest; whether in agriculture, manufactures, mining or commerce.

But to get the best and most out of labor, it must not only be intelligent, it must also be free—free to rise or sink in the social scale. It must have a voice in making the laws under which it lives. Otherwise, those laws will operate to hinder, not to help it to make the best fight of which it is capable for possession of home and foreign markets. Without this voice the laws will become more and more unequal and oppressive. A labor class deprived of freedom, of a voice in government, cannot maintain the advantage which mere intelligence and skill may have gained for it in the struggle for existence. As it loses freedom, a voice in government, it will lose ultimately its skill, its intelligence as an industrial factor. For it will become, in effect, subject to, if not exactly the slave of, the capitalistic and labor classes which are free, which make the laws. And these classes will invariably act on the assumption that the more ignorant such a subject labor class is, the less trouble it will cause. In their opinion slave labor is more manageable than free labor, gives rise to simpler social conditions, to problems less complex and difficult to handle.

Instead of establishing schools for the education of a labor class deprived of the right to vote, the class which possesses the right will not establish new ones, and will, in addition, endeavor to lower the standard of those already established and then to do away with them entirely. The chief end and purpose of the classes with the right to vote will be, not to raise the average of literacy, of intelligence of the class without that right, but to lower the same in order the better to keep it in a state of permanent industrial subordination and inferiority to themselves. And so the negro labor of the South, deprived of the right to vote, will see its schools diminish in numbers and quality, will get, in one State and then in another, fewer schools and shorter terms, until they reach the vanishing point, where in large portions of the South negro schools will disappear altogether. Under such circumstances negro labor instead of advancing in intelligence and skill, in economic efficiency, will steadily lose the ground gained by it in these respects since the war, and will retrograde to the condition of dense ignorance, of economic inefficiency, which characterized it before that event. Surely slave labor is the most unproductive, the most wasteful labor in the world. As it was not able to compete successfully with the free and intelligent labor of the North before the war, it will not be able to do so to-day or to-morrow. Ignorant negro labor must weight the South down heavily, therefore, in that industrial struggle in which it is now engaged, not alone with the rest of the nation, but with the world. And this means for Southern labor industrial inferiority to the labor of the rest of the nation and of the world. It means for the Southern States ultimate industrial feebleness and subordination to the rest of the nation, and a low order of civilization.

Thus it will be found that disfranchisement, which was intended to make the negro a surf, to degrade him as a man, to extinguish his ambition, to extinguish his intelligence, to fix

for him in the State, in society, a place of permanent inferiority and subordination to the white race, has degraded the whole South industrially at the same time, and fixed for her likewise a place of permanent economic inferiority and subordination to the rest of the nation. The huge body of her black ignorance, poverty, and degradation will attract to itself by the social laws of gravitation all of the white ignorance, poverty, and degradation of the entire section. The stupendous mass of this social and industrial wreck, of the ensuing barbarism and crime, and of race hatred and oppression, will whelm in the end in common misery and ruin whites and blacks alike, the whole labor of the South. It is hard to believe that, that section is knowingly, deliberately invoking such a fate, merely for the sake of gratifying its race prejudice against the negro. But whether it knowingly invites such consequences or not, its action invites them. For disfranchisement of the negro means, without doubt, degradation of its black labor, and this in turn the certain degradation of its white labor, and this in turn inevitable industrial feebleness and inferiority, and this in turn ultimate sectional retrogression, poverty, and a low order of civilization. Is the South ready to pay such a ruinous price for disfranchisement of the negro, for the sake of keeping him forever the servitor of the white race? Perhaps she is. It looks so; yet time alone can tell whether that section on this question is at bottom wise or foolish, sane or insane. If it shall turn out that it is really foolish, incurably mad on the negro question, then there is no hope for it within itself. It will persist in running straight upon its destruction. For alas, "Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad."

III.

It has been shown that disfranchisement of the negro is bad for the negro and for the South. It remains to consider why it is bad for the North, for the rest of the nation. But if it has been demonstrated that disfranchisement is bad for the negro and for the South, it will follow as a logical conclusion that it is bad for the rest of the nation. For whatever injures a part injures the whole. The negro is a part of the South, the South a part of the nation, in as real, as vital a sense as feet and hands are parts of the human body. Hurt a hand, lame a foot, and the whole body is hurt, lamed at the same time and for the same cause. This it not sentiment. It is fact, it is common sense, it is science. The old fable of the Members and the Belly is as true and timely today as it was in ancient Roman days. Starve the belly and the whole body is starved, suffers in consequence. Wither an arm, shrivel a leg, dim an eye, and the whole body goes maimed and halt and darkened.

Whatever, therefore, renders it impossible for the negro of the South to make the most and the best of himself injures that section, and this injury to the South hurts, in turn, the whole country. For social and economic laws draw no color line, exempt from their impartial operations no race because it happens to be white, but fall equally on all, regardless of artificial distinctions and discriminations, on rich and poor, on strong and weak, on white and black. Southern law and opinion discriminate against the black man and in favor of the white man. Not so the laws of Nature. What harms the negro's body will harm the white man's body. What degrades negro labor will degrade white labor likewise. What heals the white man's body will heal the black man's body. And what elevates white labor will elevate black labor also. This is the higher law,—a law beyond the reach of revised constitutions and American colorphobia to change or nullify—a law which a greater than the Supreme Court interprets and will execute with strict impartiality, neither for nor against the negro, neither for nor against the South, but on whose decision, on whose operation, hang verily the fate of the negro, the fate of the South, and the fate of the nation, at one and the same time.

Our country is seeking to retain old markets and find new ones for the products of its labor, both at home and abroad. That is why it has erected about that labor high tariff walls, to give to it a monopoly of the home market. That is why it is reaching out all over the world for markets for its surplus products. That is why it annexed Hawaii, Porto Rico, and the Philippines. That is why it is in favor of an open door in China. That is why it is going to build the Panama Canal. That is why it is building a great navy. It is looking out for markets with foresight and energy. Is it

looking out for its labor with equal foresight and energy? Is that policy long or short sighted which has for its object the extension of our markets for the sale of our golden eggs, but does not include any proper care for the barnyard fowl that lays those eggs? American labor is the fowl for whose eggs we are seeking markets the world over. Our national fowl is laying her eggs, is competing with the fowls of other nations. Do we produce better eggs, and are we able to sell them in world markets for less than other nations, our commercial rivals, are able to do? And if so, why are we able to produce a better article, and sell it for less than our competitors? Is it not because our national hen is a better breed of hen than the hens of other nations? Behind the egg is the hen: behind the products of labor is the laborer.

A superior laborer will produce better work and more of it than an inferior one. How comes it that American labor, outside of the South, holds to-day the front rank among the labor of the world, and has held this foremost place for eighty years? Because it is the freest and most intelligent labor in the world. For the freer and more intelligent the labor, the more efficient as an industrial factor will be that labor. The freest and most intelligent labor is the most productive, the most profitable labor. To the superiority of American labor two things have contributed more than any others: the free common school, and the educative and stimulating function exercised on the minds of laboring men by the right to vote, by the part taken periodically by them in government, in the choice of rulers, and in the consideration of public questions. The wits of the children are developed, trained in the public schools; the wits of the adults are educated, sharpened at the polls. Labor thus developed mentally, and disciplined in these two great schools of letters and practical civics, is doubly equipped, doubly armed to defend well its own interests at home and abroad, and to defend those of the country also. It is alert, assertive, thoughtful, resourceful, independent, self-respecting—capable of following and leading. It knows what it wants, what is good for it and what is not. It can take care of itself, can fight its own battle with organized capital at home, and with the rival labor of other countries in world markets. Herein lies the superiority of the labor of our American industrial democracy at the present time, with that one exception, Southern labor.

If this country is to hold what it has gained in world markets, and to add to the same in the future, can it afford longer to neglect that part of its labor which is south of Mason and Dixon's line? Can it afford much longer to look indifferently on measures which are intended to degrade and enslave any portion of our American labor, while its commercial rivals in world markets are devoting special attention to raising by educational and other means the whole body of theirs? Is the rest of the nation going to give the Southern States a free hand in dealing with the negro, when a free hand in dealing with him means on their part the maintenance of a mass of ignorant, degraded, and inefficient labor? Does not the republic need above all things, in her industrial struggle for existence with powerful rivals, to raise not alone the labor of the East, nor that of the North, nor that of the West, but that of the South as well, to raise its whole vast labor citizenry to the highest state of economic efficiency of which that labor citizenry may be capable? The answer to such questions, God knows, is obvious enough.

The means which have raised the labor of the rest of the nation to its present high state of productivity can raise Southern labor, will raise it in due time, if utilized by that section, to a state of equal economic value and industrial efficiency. The things which have made the labor of the North superior will not do less for negro laborers in the South—freedom, education, equality. Freedom to make the most and the best of themselves as men, as Americans; freedom to fall or rise in the social scale according to merit, not color; education as children in the common schools; education as citizens at the polls; and equality of rights and opportunities with other labor classes, with other groups of Americans regardless of race. When the negro progresses in industrial efficiency, in social well-being and well-doing, the South will progress in these important respects and in others. That section will gain immeasurably, not only in the improved character of its labor, in its heightened value as a producer of wealth, but in its heightened value as a consumer of the staple products of those States and of the commodities exchanged for them in

other markets. It is needless to add that the North, the rest of the nation, would gain enormously in wealth, in the volume of its Southern trade, from the same causes. It is, then, wisdom to look carefully after every hen, whether black or white, in our national barnyard, after every hen which lays for the republic golden eggs, as well as to look out for the acquisition of new markets abroad for the sale of those eggs. The national hen is of more value than her eggs, American labor, than its products.

IV.

In conclusion, there is yet another view of the subject in which the rest of the nation is vitally interested, and that is its politico-sectional side. No discussion of the question of the disfranchisement of the negro by the South is complete which ignores this aspect of it. For it is an aspect which promises eventually to come very much into notice at the North. At some time in the near or distant future it is going to occupy Northern attention to the exclusion of all other phases of the vexed question, and perhaps of all other questions of national importance besides. For at bottom it involves no less an issue than the old one of political domination between the sections. Possession or control of the government in its three co-ordinate branches has from the adoption of the Constitution been a cause of difference between the North and the South, with their contrary interests and institutions to be protected and promoted by means of the joint action of those branches.

Before the war, slavery as it affected the negro was not objectionable to the free States, but slavery as it affected those States was. It was not slavery as a moral wrong, but slavery as a political evil to which they were opposed. When they came into conflict over this subject with the slave States, it was not for the sake of helping the slaves, but themselves—it was to prevent the evil from growing as a political power, to prevent it from increasing its vote in Congress and in the electoral college, to prevent it from dominating in national affairs, in national legislation. Such domination, the free States had learned by bitter experience, acted injuriously upon their interests. Hence Northern opposition to the extension of slavery, to the admission of new slave States. Nor will the rest of the nation interfere to-day in the matter of Southern disfranchisement of the negro for the sake of the negro, that is, because it is more friendly to him than to the South. Not at all. When the rest of the nation interferes in the final settlement of this question, as it will surely interfere, its interference will have regard solely to itself, to its own interests which shall at that time demand such action. But the North cannot interfere politically in the settlement of this question, whether in behalf of the disfranchised negro, or in protection of its own sectional interests, without mortally offending its sister section, without reviving with new-born bitterness and added intensity the old and fierce rivalry between them, which played such a leading and, at times, violent part in the history of the country for a period of seventy years,—say from 1815 to 1885.

Not the wrong which slavery inflicted upon the negro was, then, the hub of the controversy between the two halves of the Union before the war of the Rebellion, but the undue influence in government which, in the opinion of the Northern, it gave to the Southern half. This undue political influence had its rise in the right of the South under the Constitution to count in the apportionment of representatives among the States five of her slaves as three freemen. This feature of the Constitution was distinctly aristocratic. It certainly was not democratic. For it gave a Southern white man who owned five negro slaves an electoral value in the republic four times greater than that of a Northern white man. This unrepublican, this disproportionate political importance of a Southern slave owner over a Northern freeman produced no end of trouble between the two classes of men. And when it is remembered that the ideas and interests of these two classes of men were far from being identical, that there was, on the contrary, no way of bringing about an identity of ideas and interests between them,—for while one of these groups was born and bred under the aristocratic idea, with a corresponding labor system which rooted itself in that idea, the other group was born and bred under the democratic idea with a corresponding labor system which rooted itself in that idea,—persons living to-day may get some notion of the fierceness and depth of the ante-bellum rivalry which waxed and waned, and waned and waxed, for a half century,

between the slaveholding and the non-slaveholding States, for possession of the general government, as a coign of vantage in the struggle between them for domination in the republic.

This strife, with alternations of reverses and triumphs, first for one side and then for the other, went on until 1861, when the rivals resorted to force to settle their differences. The war for the Union decided the momentous conflict in favor of the democratic idea and its system of free labor. The Thirteenth Amendment destroyed slavery and the slave power; or such, at least, was its purpose. The Fourteenth Amendment provided forever against a revival of the old aristocratic idea of inequality of civil conditions between the races in the South—the real ground of difference between the sections—by declaring all persons born or naturalized in the United States to be citizens of the United States. There was not again to exist in the Southern States any system of labor to take the place of the old slave labor system except that of free labor, and there was not again to appear any corresponding political power in the South to take the place of the defunct slave power; or such, at least, was the plain purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment. But in order to make assurance doubly sure on this vital point, a supplementary provision was incorporated into the amendment, to reduce the representation in Congress of any State which shall deny to any portion of its voting population the right to vote, in the proportion which the number of such disfranchised citizens "shall bear to the whole number of citizens twenty-one years of age in such State."

The rest of the nation intended by these two great acts to destroy, root and branch, the old constitutional provision which entitled the South to count five slaves as three freemen in the apportionment of representatives among the States. It was determined to rid the country for all time of any future trouble from that cause. The Reconstruction measures attempted to introduce into the old slave States the democratic idea, and a labor system corresponding to that idea. But in the event of failure in these regards, and the ultimate revival on the part of those States of the aristocratic idea, and a labor system corresponding to that idea, it was carefully provided that such revival of the old aristocratic idea and labor system should be accompanied by an equivalent loss of political power on the part of those States. They were no longer to eat their cake, metaphorically speaking, and keep it, too. For this eating and keeping something at one and the same time means that the something kept belongs to some one else than the eater. The political power which the South manages to retain in spite of her disfranchisement of the negro does not, therefore, belong to her. If she deprives the negro of the right to vote without being deprived in turn of a proportionate share of her representation in Congress, she has possessed herself wrongfully of a power in national politics, in national legislation, which rightfully belongs to the negro. And this power she may and does exercise against the negro and the North at the same time. It will be seen by the North some day, as it is seen to-day by the negro, that while her old rival has lost on paper the old three-fifths slave representation under the Constitution to which she was entitled before the war, she has not practically suffered any loss at all in this respect, but the contrary. She has actually gained since the war the other two-fifths in the apportionment of representatives among the States. For five of her disfranchised colored citizens count to-day the same as five Northern voters, instead of the proportion prevailing in ante-bellum times, when it took five slaves to equal three freemen in Federal numbers.

Following the adoption of the Fourteenth Amendment the North seemed still uneasy on this head. For very early coming events in the South were casting shadows before them to the manifest disturbance of the Northern mind. Heeding these shadows of ill omen along the Southern horizon, the North decided to clear the national sky of every shadowy possibility of a return of conditions which existed before the war, and which vexed her sorely during those bitter years. Apprehensive, then, lest the Fourteenth Amendment had not made a repetition of this history impossible, the nation adopted the Fifteenth Amendment, which ordains that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." Each of those three great steps was taken by the North to rid the country of the Southern aristocratic idea, and of its corresponding labor system; to plough into

Southern soil the democratic idea and its corresponding system of free labor; to purge the Constitution of its hateful three-fifths slave representation principle; to redress, in short, the old balance of political power between the sections in order to secure forever the domination of our Northern industrial democracy in national affairs.

Then ensued naturally enough in the wake of a period of great emotions a period of strong reaction at the North. That section grew weary of the everlasting negro question, and began to yearn for peace, for a cessation of strife between the sections; began to yearn for change, for other sensations, for other interests of a more material kind—for dollars and dividends, for railroads and mines and factories, for buying and selling, for the thousand and one things which make up the busy life, the activity of a great and enterprising people. The spirit of modern commercialism descended like a consuming flame on the new generation which followed the war. Modern industrialism sucked like a huge maelstrom the whole multifarious and multitudinous life and force of the nation into itself, with that one exception, the South.

This chapter in our history illustrates afresh the truth of the old fable of the race between the tortise and the hare, which race was not to the swift hare that stopped on the way, but to the slow, the ever moving tortoise. The Northern Hare ran swiftly, when it did run, along the course of Southern Reconstruction, but it did not endure to the end. Whereas the Southern Tortoise, slow but sure, has kept its equal pace without a pause from the close of the war to the present time. It did not weary of the everlasting negro question. It does not weary of it. It will not weary of it until it is settled to its entire satisfaction.

The democratic idea of government has been put to rout in every Southern State by the old aristocratic idea founded in race prejudice and race distinctions. A labor system is fast growing up about this idea—a labor system as much opposed to the labor system of the rest of the nation, as was the old slave system to the free labor of the North. There can be no lasting peace between them now, any more than such peace was possible between them in the period before the war. The political and industrial interests of the sections are not the same, and cannot be made the same so long as differences so fundamental in respect to government and labor exist between them. The conflict of the two contrary ideas of government, of the two contrary labor systems, for survivorship in the Union, may be postponed as it is to-day, but it cannot be extinguished except by the extinction of one or the other of the old rivals. For they are doomed, in one form or another, by economic and social laws, to ceaseless rivalry and strife.

In this strife the disfranchisement of the negro by the South is a distinct victory for the Southern idea, for the Southern rival, over the Northern idea, the Northern rival. The Southern idea has taken on new life, is resowing itself, striking powerful roots into Southern soil. And while it is steadily strengthening its ascendency over those States, its pollen dust is slowly spreading in many devious ways, blown by winds of destiny beyond the limits of those States, attacking with subtle, far-reaching and deep-reaching influences the democratic idea of the rest of the nation, giving aid and form to all those feelings, thoughts, purposes, hidden or open, but active, in the republic, hostile to popular government, to the democratic principle of equality and universal suffrage. The South has thrown down its gage of battle for the aristocratic idea, for the labor system which grows out of that idea. This gage of battle is the disfranchisement of the negro because he is a negro, and the consequent degradation of him as a laborer. Will the North accept the challenge of its old rival, will it pick up the gage of battle thus thrown down? I think that it will. I am sure that it will. When? I confess frankly I do not know. But of this I have no doubt, that when this time comes, as come it must, the negro will mark again, as he did formerly, the dead line between the combatants—between the aristocratic idea of the South and the democratic idea of the rest of the nation; between the labor system of the South and the labor system of the rest of the nation.

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